Miles Grant

An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions

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According to Mrs. White's "visions," the sanctuary to be "cleansed" at the end of the 2,300 days is in heaven; and that Christ began the work on the tenth day of the seventh month, AD 1844, at which time she claims the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14 came to an end. Where is the proof, aside from Mrs. White's visions, that heaven contains a filthy sanctuary that needed any cleansing, because it had been "trodden under foot" for 2,300 days (years)? Who were they who defiled the sanctuary in heaven during this period? How came they there?

It appears evident from the prophecy in Daniel 8:13-14 that the power which trod down "the sanctuary and the host," was the Roman, called "the transgression of desolation." How did "the transgression of desolation" get into the sanctuary in heaven to defile it, so that it needed cleansing?

The heavenly sanctuary, according to Mrs. White's own showing, is the Holy of Holies, where God has his throne. Is it reasonable to suppose that for 2,300 years he has allowed the Roman transgression of desolation to defile heaven itself—the most holy place—till the tenth day of the seventh month, AD 1844? Visions that teach such things need no further refutation than their mere announcement.

"VISIONS AND PROPHECIES"

It is a well-known fact that when a demon has control of his medium, he can cause his subjects to see anything he pleases. Like a mesmerizer, he has only to form a mental picture of anything existing, or any imaginary object; then that mental picture in the demon's mind appears to his medium as a **real** object. In this way, they deceive those under their control.

In the visions of Mrs. White, published at Topsham, Maine on **January 31, 1849,** *she says,*

"I was taken off in vision to the most holy place, where I saw Jesus still interceding for Israel. On the bottom of his garment was a bell and a pomegranate.... A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the voice of God. The 144,000 triumphed. Their faces were lighted up with the glory of God.

Then I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters -- thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting. I asked who this company were? The angel said, 'These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up.' I heard them cry with a loud voice, 'We believed in thy coming, and taught it with energy.'...

I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions, -- the way God had chosen to teach, in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm, the feeble instrument that God spake through, but against the Holy Ghost."

Again, she says,

"The Lord has given me a view of other worlds. Wings were given me, and an angel attended me from the city to a placed that was bright and glorious. The grass of the place was living green, and the birds there warbled a sweet song. The inhabitants of the place were of all sizes; they were noble, majestic and lovely.... Then I was taken to a world which has seven moons. There I saw good old Enoch, who had been translated. On his right arm he bore a glorious palm, and on each leaf was written victory. Around his head was a dazzling white wreath, and leaves on the wreath, and in the middle of each leaf was written purity.... I asked him if this was the place he was taken to from the earth? He said, 'It is not, but the city is my home, and I have come to visit this place.'"

In a vision of Mrs. White, **March 24, 1849,** *she says,*

"I was shown that the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, relating to the shut door, could not be separated." She had visions showing that the door of mercy was closed to sinners on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844. The witnesses to this fact are abundant. She was then shown that "the door was opened in the most holy place" at that time, and then Jesus entered it for the first time. She was then shown that "the mediation of Jesus was finished in the holy place of the sanctuary in 1844. Then Jesus rose up and shut the door in the Holy Place."

She goes on to say,

"The midnight cry was finished at the seventh month, 1844 . . . My accompanying angel bade me look for the travail of soul for sinners as used to be. I looked, but could not see it, for the time for their salvation is past" ("Views of Ellen G. White," pp. 24-27).

"Visions and prophecies" should be received with great caution, as they are a means by which Satan attempts to deceive people in these last days, and by which he has often led them into error and darkness. This is most apparent in Spiritualism, which is crowded with "visions and prophecies." From the early ages of the world to the present time, Satan has been producing counterfeit "visions and prophecies," with which to seduce the Lord's children, and it is not reasonable to suppose that in these last days he has quietly retired from his deceitful work. He has had great success in this business, and often led honest souls to follow his false "visions and prophecies," and thus form a new religious party. This was the case with Joanna Southcott, Ann Lee, Joseph Smith, Emmanuel Swedenborg and many others that might be named.

MRS. WHITE'S VISIONS

The question here arises, "Is Mrs. Ellen White, of Battle Creek, Michigan, a true prophetess of the Lord, and are her visions from him?" Recent developments demand that this question should be candidly and fully answered. If the Lord has chosen her as a prophetess to lead his people in these last days, the fact should be known in all the world, and all the saints should listen to her voice, and rely upon her visions; but if she is a false prophetess and *visionist*, the disciples of Christ should be faithfully warned against putting any confidence in her visions and prophecies. The interests involved in this matter demand a thorough investigation. We would that this unpleasant duty could have fallen upon some other person; but we feel assured that the Lord would not have us remain silent on this subject any longer. It is well known that Mrs. White's visions and prophecies are endorsed by the Seventh-day Adventists, whose headquarters are in Battle Creek, Michigan. They have voted in conferences the acceptance of her as a true prophetess of the Lord. Of course, this vote does not settle the matter. The "True Israelites" would vote that Joanna Southcott was a prophetess of the Lord; the Mormons would vote that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Lord; and Swedenborgians would vote the same of Emmanuel Swedenborg; and so on, to the end of the chapter.

We think all candid, Bible-loving people will be ready to admit that prophecies and visions given by the Lord are invariably true. He makes no mistakes, and teaches no false doctrine. Prophecies and visions from him do not contradict facts; they do not contradict themselves, nor the Sacred Scriptures. It follows that if it can be clearly shown that Mrs. White's visions and prophecies do contradict facts, themselves and the Bible, the conclusion will be inevitable that they do not come from the Lord, and are therefore of no more consequence than those from any other false prophet.

In the "Advent Review and Herald of the Sabbath," July 2 and 9, 1874, we find articles headed "Visions and Prophecies," from which we make some extracts. Before doing so, we wish to say that in these articles it is claimed that the Seventh-day Adventists are the "remnant" church referred to in Revelation—"the last of the true church." They make this claim because they "keep all the Ten Commandments," and "have the spirit of prophecy in exercise among them."

The writer says,

"In regard to the spirit of prophecy, it is a remarkable fact that from the first of their existence as a people, Seventh-day Adventists have claimed that it has been in active exercise among them.... It is a fact, that for nearly 30 years, Mrs. Ellen G. White—the wife of Elder James White, both of them pioneers in this movement—has had visions, which are generally regarded by those in sympathy with this church as being from the Lord; and it is freely admitted that they have exerted a large influence in making Seventh-day Adventism what it now is."

We would also say it is a fact that many honest Christian men and women who once had confidence in her visions have none at all at present. Why is this? We shall see soon.

Let us apply the biblical test to Mrs. White's visions.

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deuteronomy 18:22).

When we try Mrs. White's "Visions and Prophecies" by this rule, we find the word "*tekel*" written against them. Take, for instance, her vision and prophecy which declared the door of mercy was closed on the tenth day of the seventh month in 1844. Had that vision been from the **Lord** it would have been **true**; and no sinner could have obtained pardon since that date. Was that vision and prophecy true? The whole Christian world, angels, Christ and God would thunder forth an emphatic, "No!" Then the vision was not from the Lord. She also had a vision showing that Christ did not go within the veil, into the holy of holies in the presence of his Father, till the tenth day of the seventh month, in 1844; whereas the Bible positively teaches that Christ was "within the veil," in the holy of holies, in the presence of God, when the apostles were living.

We now see why many honest Christian people who once had confidence in Mrs. White's visions have given them up as unworthy of their confidence; and, if facts were fully known, we believe all others would do the same. There are three reasons why they cannot be accepted as coming from the Lord:

1. They contradict FACTS
2. They contradict THEMSELVES
3. They contradict the BIBLE

Any ONE of these reasons, by itself, would afford positive proof that the "visions and prophecies" do not come from the Lord; but the evidence is abundant to show that they ALL apply to her visions, and that they are no more reliable than those of Joanna Southcott, Ann Lee and Emmanuel Swedenborg, or those coming from the Spiritualist mediums of the present time. We are bold to say, that not a single prophecy or vision of hers can be produced that may not have been given by a demon.

We do not doubt Mrs. White's honesty and sincerity, and the same could be said of Joanna Southcott or Emmanuel Swedenborg, and many others that might be named, who have had "visions and prophecies." We have not, and have never had, a particle of unkind feeling toward Mrs. White or her supporters, but when we see honest people being led astray by the cunning artifices of Satan, we feel it to be a Christian duty to sound a note of alarm, hoping that by so doing we may be instrumental in keeping some from falling into the snare.

Mrs. White had her first visions and prophecies in 1844-1845. At that time, she was living in Maine, her native State. She was then unmarried, and her maiden name was Ellen Harmon. Her visions and prophecies were well known, and much talked about, at that time. Many who believed them at first were afterwards were forced to reject them when it was fully shown that they were contradictory and opposed to facts. These points may be as clearly proved by the most reliable witnesses, as that she ever had any visions, or ever uttered any prophecies. We have only room for a few testimonies among the multitude that might be given.

Brother Isaac C. Wellcome, of Yarmouth, Maine, a faithful minister of Christ, says,

"I was often in meetings with Ellen G. Harmon and James White in 1844 and 1845. Several times, I caught her while falling to the floor at times when she swooned away for a vision. I have heard her relate her visions of these dates. Several were published . . . to the effect that all were lost who did not endorse the 1844 move, that Christ had left the throne of mercy, and all were sealed that ever would be, and no others could repent. She and James taught this for one or two years. Recently, in her published visions, called "Testimony," her visions differ widely, and directly and flatly contradict her former ones."

Brother Israel Dammon, of Corinna, Maine, another faithful minister of Christ, and his devoted wife, testify as follows:

"We were formerly acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. White, and for a time had confidence in her visions, but for a good many years have had none at all. When we saw that they conflicted one with another, we renounced them altogether, and betook ourselves to the word of the Lord. It has been some 20 years or more since we were associated with Mrs. White; but we remember very perfectly that her first vision was told both by herself and others (especially by Mrs. White) in connection with the preaching of the 'shut door,' and went to substantiate the same. While under that influence, and preaching the visions, she, in vision, saw N.G. Reed and I. Dammon in the kingdom, in an immortal state, and crowned. After that, she saw them finally lost. How could both be true? I think one was just as true as the other, and that God never told her any such thing."

Brother John Megquier, of Saco, Maine (formerly of West Poland, Maine), a farmer, noted for his upright character and Christian integrity, says,

"We well know the course of Ellen G. White, the *visionist*, while in the State of Maine. About the first visions that she had were at my house in Poland. She said God had told her in vision that the door of mercy had closed, and there was no more chance for the world, and she would tell who had got spots on their garments; and those spots were got on by questioning her visions, whether they were of the Lord or not. Then she would tell them what to do, or what duty to perform, to get into favor with God again. Then God would show her, through a vision, who was lost, and who was saved in different parts of the State, according as they received or rejected her visions. She could put herself under their influence, just the same as any mesmeric person would. The Advent people in the State of Maine have no confidence in her course nor visions; and she has but a few followers in this State, which is her native State, but she has succeeded in raising up quite a number of followers in some of the Western States. They will go into new places, and like to go best where the Advent doctrine has been introduced. They will preach the Advent doctrine first; then will introduce the

seventh day; and last, and most important, they must receive Ellen with all of her different messages, which is a perfect snare of the Devil. If persons would only take pains to read the history of Ann Lee, the founder of the Shakers, they would see a perfect similarity between the two. Ann commenced to form the Shaker Society through visions, which, she claimed, were from God. She got some followers, and they have increased to quite a large society; and some of them still have visions, directing what to eat and wear, just the same as Ellen does for her followers. No doubt it is one of the last-day signs, and a perfect snare of the devil.... There are a large number of living witnesses that can testify to these things."

The following is from Sister L.S. Burdick of San Francisco, California, formerly wife of Elder John Howell, an able and devoted minister of Christ, who lived in Maine when Mrs. White was there having visions. Brother and Sister Howell were well acquainted with Mrs. White. Sister Howell has held her head in her lap while she was having her visions. Sister Burdick says,

"I became acquainted with James White and Ellen Harmon early in 1845. At the time of my first acquaintance with them, they were in a wild fanaticism. They used to sit on the floor instead of chairs, and creep around the floor like little children. Such actions were considered a mark of humility. They were not married, but were traveling together. Ellen was having what was called visions.

She said that God had shown her in vision that Jesus Christ arose on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, and shut the door of mercy; that he had left forever the mediatorial throne; that the whole world was doomed and lost; and that there never could be another sinner saved.

She very soon pretended to see that Saturday must be kept as the Sabbath. Her visions were something new, and there seemed to be, at first, no decided opposition to them in the different churches where they traveled. They caused a great deal of discussion and excitement, and all seemed disposed to investigate.

But, after a little while, her visions began to conflict one with the other. It was ascertained by myself (and others who saw her in vision) that she could throw herself into vision when she chose (this she confessed), but that James White could control them, and bring her out when he pleased. There were also many failures. She pretended that God showed her things which did not come to pass.

At one time, she saw that the Lord would come the second time in June 1845. The prophecy was discussed in all the churches, and in a little "shut-door paper" published in Portland, Maine. During the summer, after June passed, I heard a friend ask her how she accounted for the vision. She replied that they told her in the language of Canaan, and she did not understand the language; that it was the next September that the Lord was coming, and the second growth of grass instead of the first in June. September passed, and many more have passed since, and we have not seen the Lord yet.

It soon became evident to all candid persons, that **many** things must have been 'told her in the language of Canaan,' or some other which she did not understand, as there were repeated failures. I could mention many which I knew of myself.

Once, when on their way to the eastern part of Maine, she saw that they would have great trouble with the wicked, be put in prison, etc. This they told in the churches as they passed through. When they came back, they said they had a glorious time. Friends asked if they had seen any trouble with the wicked, or prisons. They replied, 'None at all.' People in all the churches soon began to get their eyes open, and came out decidedly against her visions; and, just as soon as they did so, she used to see them 'with spots on their garments,' as she expressed it.

I was personally acquainted with several ministers, whom she saw landed in the kingdom with 'Oh! such brilliant crowns, FULL of stars.' As soon as they took a stand against the visions, she saw them 'doomed, damned, and lost for ever, without hope.'

Their traveling together, as they did, before marriage, brought a great scandal upon the cause. People generally felt that such intimacy should not exist between unmarried persons, and begged him to leave Ellen at home, and go himself and preach the gospel. He met them with insult and abuse, declaring that he never would bow to man. The churches all through the State of Maine (which is Ellen's native state) lost confidence in them. There was occasionally, here and there, a family, or individual, whom they seemed to hold under a kind of mesmeric influence, who stood by

them and defended them. They were, after a while, married, and worked west, where they were not much known; and perhaps she learned to be more cautious and to have more consistent visions.

If these visions which she now has are of God, the first were not; and if the first were of God, the door of mercy was closed in 1844, and woe to the poor sinners this side of there! We know that God does not lie; and some of them did lie, to my certain knowledge. God does not contradict himself, and her visions have contradicted each other. I have been told that they deny on this coast that she ever saw the door of mercy closed; but there are thousands of living witnesses who know that a blacker lie could not be invented, and I am one of the number."

It is a well-known fact, most fully attested by reliable witnesses, that Mrs. Ellen White professed to have visions from the Lord, to the effect that **the door of mercy was closed against sinners on the tenth day of the seventh month in 1844**; and that then Jesus, for the first time, went into the Holy of Holies. The following statement is from one who has been a preacher among those who observe the seventh day:

"I was at George Barker's house, in Norridgewock, Maine, in 1869, when I asked Mrs. Ellen White, in the presence of several ministers, if she ever had a vision showing that the door of mercy was closed. She answered, 'I never did.' Soon after, Elder C. Stratton came into the room and asked the same question, and received the same answer. I affirm this to be true" (L.L. Howard, Boston, Massachusetts, September 28, 1874).

VISIONS AND PROPHECIES

Thosewho have any confidence in Mrs. Ellen G. White's visions and prophecies, as coming from the Lord, should read a work titled, "Mrs. Ellen G. White's Claim to Divine Inspiration Examined," by H.E. Carver, published by "Hope of Israel," in Marion, Iowa. We do not see how anyone can have a particle of confidence in Mrs. White's visions, after reading this work by Brother Carver, who has been intimately associated with those who sympathize with Mrs. White. Everybody who is at all inclined to believe that Mrs. White is a true prophetess of the Lord should read this work.

After a careful examination of the foregoing facts relating to Mrs. White's visions, we think it is most clearly shown that they do not come from the Lord; consequently, they are of no value to the Christian, and should be rejected by all the true disciples of Jesus.